

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present response, claims 14, 15, 20, 21, 35, and 36 will have been written into independent form. As a result, claims 1, 19, and 22 have been canceled. Additionally, claims 2, 3-10, 12, 16-18, and 23, 25-31, 33, and 37-38 have been amended to change their respective dependencies.

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for attaching the PTO-1449 form and the Notice of References cited, the latter having been appropriately initialed by the Examiner to indicate consideration of the documents.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for his indication that claims 14, 15, 20, 21, 35, and 36 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. In the present response, Applicants have written claims 14, 15, 20, 21, 35, and 36 into independent form.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5-13, 16-19, 22, 23, 26-34, 37, and 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over BURG et al. (U.S. 6,456,699) in view of NORTON et al. (U.S. 6,510,411). The Examiner also rejected claims 3 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over BURG et al. in view of NORTON, and further in view of O'SULLIVAN (U.S. 5,493,608). The Examiner also rejected claims 4 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over BURG et al. in view of NORTON, and further in view of DEWAN (U.S. 6,654,447). Applicants have not acquiesced in the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, but have amended the claims solely to advance prosecution.

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In addition to writing claims 14, 15, 20, 21, 35, and 36 into independent form, Applicants have changed the respective dependencies of claims 2, 3-10, 12-13, 16-18, and 23, 25-31, 33, and 37-38. Applicants have canceled claims 1, 19, and 22 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof and Applicants reserve the right to file a continuation application including these claims.

As indicated by the Examiner, claims 14, 15, 20, 21, 35, and 36 contain allowable subject matter. With regard to dependent claims 2-13, 16-18, 23-34 and 37-38, Applicants assert that they are allowable on their own merit, in addition to being allowable for depending either directly or indirectly from independent claims 14, 15, 20, 21, 35, and 36 which the Examiner has indicated to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in any proper combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

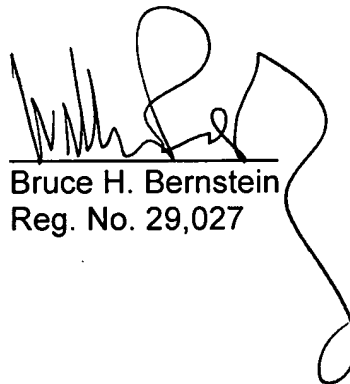
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objections and rejections of the claims, as well as an indication of the allowability of each of the claims in view of the present remarks.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the recited claims are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Philip KORTUM et al.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce H. Bernstein', is written over a horizontal line. A long, vertical, looping flourish extends from the right side of the signature.

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